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From Sisters to CEO's: Defining Organizational Rhetoric in a Case Study of Social Sorority Bylaws

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FROM SISTERS TO CEO'S: DEFINING ORGANIZATIONAL RHETORIC IN A CASE
STUDY OF SOCIAL SORORITY BYLAWS

by

PAIGE MARIE ROOD
B.A. Auburn University, 2013

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

Organizational Rhetoric is typically used in the fields of Communication and Mass Communication to examine the communicative strategies that animate businesses and corporate organizations. This study aims to give a more rhetorically focused definition of organizational rhetoric by emphasizing how communicative acts structure action and shape the construction of identity in settings beyond formal workplaces. Based on an analysis of the social sorority bylaws of Kappa Alpha Theta and the rhetorical situations those bylaws address, this study suggests that social sororities employ organizational rhetoric as an effective means of persuading their members to be active participants within the organization. Ultimately, the analysis argues that the rhetoric employed by social sororities mimics the typified, effective rhetorical moves of an organization to shape the agency and identities of their members.

To my family, this culmination of work is dedicated to you. I appreciate all of your time and support—I needed it.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grandpa, more specifically this is for you. You have always motivated me to be educated, but you always wanted me to go above and beyond. I might not have always understood, but now I do. I love you.

Mom, this document may mean more to you than it does to me. All of the hard work was in efforts to prove that *your* hard work to get me through school was appreciated and valued. You have always been a role model for showing me that hard work can get you anywhere. Thank you for teaching me that my education was the best passport a girl could have.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER ONE: EXAMINING THE RHETORIC OF SORORITY LIFE	1
Literature Review.....	3
Why Study Sororities?	6
Scholarly Representation of Sororities	12
A Personal Perspective	18
Organizational Rhetoric	24
Studying Organizational Rhetoric of Sororities.....	26
Chapter Overviews.....	26
CHAPTER TWO: THEORY AND METHOD	28
Theory	29
Method	31
CHAPTER THREE: ANALYZING THE RHETORICAL SITUATION OF THE BYLAWS...	35
Rhetorical Situation of Sorority Bylaws	36
Rhetorical Situation— Exigence.....	36
Rhetorical Situation—Rhetor.....	37
Rhetorical Situation—Audience	38

Rhetorical Situation—Constraints	40
CHAPTER FOUR: “EVERY(ONE)” TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF SORORITY BYLAWS	42
Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “ Every ” within the Sorority.	44
Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “ One ” within the Sorority	50
CHAPTER FIVE: FINAL THOUGHTS	54
APPENDIX: ETA THETA, KAPPA ALPHA THETA BYLAWS	59
REFERENCES	75

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 contains a screen capture of Alpha Phi recruitment video. Photo above depicts Alpha Phi member not showing her face while still trying to represent the sorority. Member is being nameless as to spotlight the sorority as a whole.	9
Figure 2 comprises of a screen capture of Alpha Phi recruitment video. Photo above shows Alpha Phi members running toward the lake. Critics say that this is objectifying the women.	9
Figure 3 contains a screen capture from Alpha Phi recruitment video. Critics say that the members are “aesthetically homogeneous” (Bailey). Alpha Phi members are laughing and holding hands while lying on the ground.....	10
Figure 4 is a screen capture from Alpha Phi recruitment video. Sorority members are like-minded people coming together and creating an identity through the sorority. Alpha Phi members, dressed in game day attire, sit outside Bryant-Denny Stadium at the University of Alabama.	10
Figure 5 comprises of a Delta Zeta button from Auburn University (Delta Zeta)	18
Figure 6 illustrates a Gamma Phi Beta button from Auburn University (Gamma Phi Beta)	18
Figure 7 contains a personal photo of Auburn University Kappa Alpha Theta members wearing their buttons on game day	19

CHAPTER ONE: EXAMINING THE RHETORIC OF SORORITY LIFE

The CEO pounded the gavel. Suddenly over a hundred members stifled their murmurs and uniformly sat down in their assigned seats. The front two rows shuffled their notes and stared intently on the front three members. The CEO was standing in the middle with the gavel in her hands. Her stance made her the pinnacle of the room's attention.

"We are going to go ahead and start the meeting. Do we have quorum?" The CEO asked the recording secretary. She answered, "Yes, we have quorum."

"Okay we can start the meeting. I don't have any information to present today so we will now hear from the officers in standing committees," The CEO said with a stern voice as she looked down at her notes. "We will now hear from our CFO."

"President," she quietly said as she stood in front of the members "This week we earned two hundred and fifty dollars and we spent seven hundred and sixty dollars, leaving our remaining balance at sixty thousand one hundred and fifty-eight dollars and seventy-nine cents".

"Thank you. We will now hear from our chief administrative officer" The CFO sat back into her chair as the next person in the row began to rise.

"Okay ladies," The CAO, said making her voice echo across the room. The CAO was a position that knew everything. She knew about every event that was going to happen, how much money we had and what was being said about us on campus. She was all knowing in that regard. In the

end she held a lot of weight in encouraging (or many times, guilt tripping) the members to attend or participate in events.

“This week is a busy week for our chapter. Tomorrow we have a social with Lambda Chi, Zeta, and Phi Delt. We have a recruitment practice on Sunday at 12:00 with Delta Zeta, and Saturday we will be making the signs for our Philanthropy. I am passing around a sheet of paper where you will sign your name to sign up for the event. You will get six Bettie points for coming to the sign painting. Ladies, make sure you are attending these events, it is important for us to show up to these events so that we can get stronger as a chapter, and people see more of us, and they can see we are involved. Okay? You will hear more specifics about these events from the committee heads. That’s all I have.” She nodded gently to the president before sitting.

This was the pattern for the entire meeting before the gavel was pounded at the end signaling the close to our meeting. The members of the sorority filed in and out of the chapter room like ants knowing their exact place and role within the colony.

From the beginning of my membership in a sorority it was apparent that this was not simply a social group of girls, but these college aged women functioned like a national organization. They had structure, consistency, and participation. It was easy for me to see that this social environment could provide for an area of study. It was a place that other organizations and their members could observe the sorority’s actions and reactions to situations. It was an environment that used rhetorical strategies that I wanted to expand on.

Literature Review

Within rhetorical studies, there is an interest in examining non-academic environments in order to study the different applications of rhetoric. Often, the term rhetoric stems back to the ancient study of orating, used by the likes of Aristotle. In fact, Jack Seltzer explains in his text "Rhetorical Analysis: Understanding How Texts Persuade Readers" that "rhetoric has a long association with education..." (280). Aristotle's view of rhetoric and education has propelled scholars to spend a lot of time writing about rhetoric in education or in the classroom. This is where in rhetorical studies there is a drive for looking at the role of rhetoric in academic contexts. Rhetoricians begin by studying the art of rhetoric: what it includes, how it works, and the different theories of it. However; as rhetoricians continued this research they also made a move toward applying and observing rhetoric in non-academic environments.

Authors like Lester Faigley, who studies digital technologies and visual rhetorics, takes a different perspective to writing and rhetoric. In his article "Nonacademic Writing; The Social Perspective" Faigley takes a specific look into the use of writing in everyday life primarily looking at what he describes as, "[r]esearchers taking a social perspective study how individual acts of communication define, organize, and maintain social groups" (235). This view of communication goes beyond the simple action of writing and communicating, but instead suggests how these types of communication can encourage organization within non-academic groups. Not only does the language encourage a type of organization within a group, but Faigley

states that, “few, if any, texts are written for everyone who is capable of deciphering the words. Texts are almost always written for persons in restricted groups” (238). It could be understood that through specified language, or lexis, organizational groups are able to have a selective membership and use this language to restrict membership to a select few. Then, those who are included in membership are the only ones who are able to decipher the meanings and underlying goals of the text. In understanding that there is a restricted membership through the texts we are writing, it is important to then note that looking at texts from an outside perspective might not be as beneficial as understanding texts as a selected member. It would benefit academic studies to have an internal perspective on one non-academic environment that could lead the way for new studies that benefit our observation of writing and rhetoric’s penetration in different environments. Academic studies would benefit from looking at how a successful group functions through a specific text. For example, getting a current or former member or employee of a successful organization to analyze or discuss the implications of a particular text is helpful because as a member they are able to pull apart the intricacies of the text. These individuals are also able to recall places of interest within the text that may exist.

The book *Writing in Non-Academic Settings* is another compilation of multiple works that evaluates the many different settings where writing can be looked at and discussed. Some of the areas that are discussed within this work are vehicles (Redish et al., 129), computer programming (Redish et al., 129), technology and electronics (Halpern, 157), communication (Murray, 203), engineering (Miller and Selzer, 309), and many more. However, one non-academic environment that has caught the attention of many scholars not only in this book but in other scholarship as well is writing in the workplace. Here we make the move that rhetoric is not

just in academics, and in non-academic environments, but scholars make another move to look at how rhetoric specifically impacts the workplace.

Francis Sullivan, writes in his article published for *Written Communication*, about tax examiners and their texts within the working environment. Sullivan focuses on the literacies of these workers and the forms they use within their daily working environment. Although this piece aims to show literacy practices within the workplace, it also gives way for there to be a conversation about writing practices within this workplace environment. If there is writing, then there is rhetoric.

In *Writing Workplace Cultures: An Archaeology of Professional Writing*, Jim Henry addresses the writing practices within a workplace environment. Henry examines writers in some of the following workplaces: private businesses and corporations, government agencies and institutions, and professional associations and societies. In this text, he discusses the many forms of writing that might be conducted within these different business environments. Casting a large net for discussing business writing, many organizations can fit perfectly into the definitions of these groups if not identify with some of the writing practices that take place within these environments.

Using the ideas of the non-academic environment and the idea of rhetoric in the workplace, along with my own personal experiences, I have found that social sororities¹ fit within both of these categories. Sororities can be seen as a non-academic environment that is

¹ Social Sororities is a more specific way of talking about sororities. There are many different types of sororities (academic, service, and social). They all focus on one aspect as their main goal. In this case most people are familiar with social sorority organizations, because of their social nature and frequent depiction within the media.

explained by Faigley's idea of writing in everyday life (an environment that helps in avenues of communication, organization and maintenance of social groups). These groups might not be the first that come to mind when discussing writing in everyday life; nevertheless, sorority membership is a part of everyday life for those involved and can have a major effect on the amount and type of writing and rhetoric that one encounters during the day. In addition, much of the terminology used within the sorority and the ways in which they conduct business allows for them to be categorized as a workplace or a business. I will later illustrate examples of this business-like rhetoric that is used within a particular text for all sorority members to show that we might have something to learn from this organization's text.

Why Study Sororities?

My interest in sororities is much more invested than simply finding that sororities function as a workplace and non-academic environment. I have personally spent the last six years as an active member and alumna of a social sorority. During that time, I have obtained many different leadership positions, and I have seen the organization function through many different perspectives as both an active member and alumna. Besides participating as a member and working with the sorority as an alumna, I have also done research on sororities through my undergraduate career; however, it was a constant struggle for me to conduct research as an undergraduate about greek life² organizations because the information I found always seemed to cast greek organizations in a negative light and the articles were from an outsider's perspective.

² Greek life is the term used for fraternities and sororities as a collective whole.

These articles discussed a variety of unfavorable topics. My efforts are to add to the current greek life conversation and contribute useful, practical information on social sororities that do work in showing the positive attributes of a sorority that are valuable to us as scholars.

Popular Media Representation of Sororities

Recent events have also put greek organizations in the media and discussing greek life activities and behaviors has become a topic of debate. The University of Alabama (U of A) has specifically been under the spotlight for their sororities and their behaviors. In particular, *The Huffington Post* covered two cases within the past three years that involve negative behaviors of sororities. In 2013, some U of A sororities were caught denying “a black woman a bid simply because of her race” (Scherker para.1). Allegedly, it was not the fault of the current sorority members but was instead the actions of sorority alumnae who donate heavily to the organization. These alumnae were threatening the current members to pull funding if they extended bids to women of any different race. This scandal was a harsh blow to what sororities stand for and many people had something to comment on this particular situation. Both greek and non-greek affiliates were horrified with the actions of this Panhellenic³ group; however, greek membership did not decline, and sororities and fraternities still maintained functionality on campus. The following year, 2014, a Chi Omega from the U of A was kicked out of her sorority for sending a racist snapchat that bragged about not bidding a black woman for that fall semester (Kingkade n.p.). Again, greek organizations as a whole were put to blame and put in a spotlight that hurt the reputation of the greek community.

³ The overarching name for women’s greek life organizations.

As of 2015, there has been an additional event from U of A that has once again put sorority membership in the public eye. This time the Alpha Phi sorority posted a recruitment [video](#) that caught national attention. The video was recognized by viewers for its over the top nature with girls prancing around in their bathing suits and other sexualized behaviors. It had many people asking a lot of questions across different media outlets. The scrutiny came before sorority recruitment and didn't deal so much with the newest members but instead came as a controversy for current members and assigning the responsibility to these girls. One stand out critique happened when AL.com contributor A.L. Bailey posted an article named “Bama Sorority Video Worse for Woman than Donald Trump” stating in the article that,

No, it's not a slick Playboy Playmate or Girls Gone Wild video. It's a sorority recruiting tool gaining on 500,000 views in its first week on YouTube. It's a parade of white girls and blonde hair dye, coordinated clothing, bikinis and daisy dukes, glitter and kisses, bouncing bodies, euphoric hand-holding and hugging, gratuitous booty shots, and matching aviator sunglasses. It's all so racially and aesthetically homogeneous and forced, so hyper-feminine, so reductive and objectifying, so Stepford Wives: College Edition. It's all so ... unempowering.
(para. 2)

The article continues stating that, these women were “selling themselves short” (Bailey para.16). Other titles state that, “Univ. of Alabama’s Alpha Phi Recruitment Video Oppresses Diversity and Individuality” (Budd). Criticism continued in YouTube and article comments mirroring the same negative thoughts of the sorority. Since catching such disparaging attention, the sisters from the chapter removed the video from all accounts, yet critics still carried access to the main source. The main critiques the Alpha Phi members received was that the video didn't show enough diversity within the sorority, and that it was objectifying women. Below are some screenshots from the original video to provide some insight to the criticism.



Figure 1 contains a screen capture of Alpha Phi recruitment video. Photo above depicts Alpha Phi member not showing her face while still trying to represent the sorority. Member is being nameless as to spotlight the sorority as a whole.



Figure 2 comprises of a screen capture of Alpha Phi recruitment video. Photo above shows Alpha Phi members running toward the lake. Critics say that this is objectifying the women.



Figure 3 contains a screen capture from Alpha Phi recruitment video. Critics say that the members are “aesthetically homogeneous” (Bailey). Alpha Phi members are laughing and holding hands while lying on the ground.



Figure 4 is a screen capture from Alpha Phi recruitment video. Sorority members are like-minded people coming together and creating an identity through the sorority. Alpha Phi members, dressed in game day attire, sit outside Bryant-Denny Stadium at the University of Alabama.

As it was discussed earlier in one of the media sources for greek life research, diversity is a problem within this university's Panhellenic program. Figures 1-4 show the exact effects of the diversity problem by showing as what is perceived to be all Caucasian females, and the overwhelming majority of these girls are blonde. I argue that this is a problem that is affecting the Panhellenic system as a whole-- not just this particular sorority. The other criticism was that it objectified women. I contend that recruitment happens at the end of summer. Therefore, this video was produced during the summer time, which explains why the members in Figure 1 and 2 chose to wear bathing suits. These women were also making this video on a lake, so it seems reasonable that they are in their bathing suits to jump in the water. These photos above may come as a shock or as additional support to the criticism mentioned, but I find it hard to criticize college aged women for acting their own age. College age women (18-22) are more concerned about how they are perceived and having fun with their friends as opposed to addressing misogynistic values and diversity issues at the university's level within a sorority recruitment video. These recruitment videos are meant to attract potential new members who are about to go through the recruitment at that particular university, not the entire public.

But overall, I want to reframe the perspective and to point out the idea of membership and organization that is shown within this video. In the screenshots above it shows how much time and organization it takes to get each member to coordinate accordingly. Each figure shows examples of membership affiliation, teamwork, and how groups of individuals as a whole. Even Figure 1 shows the group with the single member holding the sorority flag. These sorority members will identify through their sorority letters instead of seeing themselves in the physical member holding the flag. This one member has her back turned because *she* is not Alpha Phi the

sorority, but instead is representing that the letters “ΑΦ” define and identify the sorority Alpha Phi as a whole.

Could we argue that these images embody everything that was critiqued about this sorority and more? Absolutely, but let’s not rhetorically analyze the behaviors of a video that doesn’t dictate the actions of a sorority. It’s easy to criticize college kids for being college kids, but it bears few rewards. We can make more scholarly efforts, by looking at the works that are produced that help these organizations function and act accordingly. What is it that gives these members a sense of pride and unity? Adding to this side of the conversation can potentially help scholars in more ways than just looking at and chastising these organizations.

We could look to the media for a representation of greek life, it would be a disservice to all the scholars out there writing to try to define and identify these organizations. But even scholars cannot always capture all the aspects and benefits of greek life. Sometimes major internal aspects of greek life are overlooked to perpetuate the information that is already perceived of greek life affiliation. It is important to explore what is already being discussed in terms of sororities and greek life participants in order to find the areas that are overlooked and underappreciated.

Scholarly Representation of Sororities

Although this is some scholarship that discusses how greek organizations can benefit in post-graduate affairs and help illustrate how some activities are conducted within the organization, the overwhelming amount of research completed against greek organizations leads to a negative perception of these groups and how they function. It is rarely said or discussed outright that sororities are full of intelligent members that care about their future endeavors. Very

rarely do we see how sororities work and function toward facilitating attitudes that help sorority members toward reaching their occupational goals. Scholarly articles continue this cycle of negative information. Ultimately the work that is done with greek life has covered up, if not prevented, scholars from adding a scholastic element to greek life and attempting to look at what influence greek life affiliation can have on the members in the future but what it can do for the members while in their academic careers. Instead many researchers have focused on research that tries to illuminate these stereotypical behaviors for greek life affiliates. The following paragraphs will illustrate some examples I have found while conducting research on social sororities, and a general understanding of what research is currently out there pertaining greek life.

Scott Hunt and Kimberly Miller discuss in their article "The Discourse of Dress and Appearance: Identity Talk and a Rhetoric of Review" how sorority members create their identities through the way that they construct themselves through their appearance. In this research, Hunt and Miller interviewed sorority members about their personal appearance and why they dressed a certain way in search of seeing if dress had anything to do with sorority affiliation. The researchers also asked the girls about their views on appearance and how they view others personal appearance based upon their physical representations. Through their research they viewed the language that was being used to construct these images. Hunt and Miller state that, "[a] person's dress and appearance was imputed to be a reflection of an individual's 'personality' or 'culture', if it was considered a reflection of anything at all" (73). Through this, it was found that individuals use their physical dress and appearance in order to represent their personality or surrounding culture instead of representing their sorority affiliation.

This article, although insightful as to how sorority members construct themselves, casts the sorority members in a very superficial role by assuming that dress would be influenced by sorority affiliation. It also looked past how caring about personal appearance could be a positive benefit toward helping the member in their future professional environment. For instance, authors like Brenda Dias, Kimberly Goad, and Lizandra Vega, specifically do research on how appearance does have an effect on an individual's success.

Sorority members are also portrayed as being manipulators of weight. In their article, "Do Sororities Promote Members' Health? A Study of Memorable Messages Regarding Weight and Appearance" the authors, Jenna E. Reno, and Lacy G. McNamee discuss how being in sororities have implications on members' body image. In particular, they link how the sorority as an organization's image is part of the reason in which this is a problem. The study was conducted at a small southwestern private institution. Here, sorority members were given a questionnaire. Through this questionnaire, it was discovered that although in the majority of cases the sorority helped increase self-esteem, it also did so through creating some adverse reactions toward healthy habits (i.e. in cases encouragement to focus on their outer and physical appearances). However, this research is still focusing on sorority membership and its correlation to weight. The scholars don't look past another negative topic to discuss when looking at and researching sororities. This research aims to find that sorority membership leads to eating disorders, but that is not what all sorority members try to instill in their members. Starting the research looking specifically for sorority members and eating disorder is doomed from the start. If that is what is researched it will be the information that is found.

Sorority members are often cast in a superficial light and only care about looks and weight but another major misconception is that greek affiliation is synonymous with alcohol abuse. In the article “‘Liquor before Beer, You’re in the Clear’: Binge Drinking and Other Risk Behaviors among Fraternity/sorority Members and Their Non-Greek Peers” authors Kathleen Ragsdale, Jeremy R. Porter, Rahel Mathews, Allyn White, Cheryl Gore-Felton, and Elizabeth L. Mcgarvey, take time in this article to research both students who participate in greek life and those who do not and their relation to alcohol abuse and other “risk behaviors.” In this study, the authors take a sample from the University of Virginia. They first illuminate the existing data and information on this topic of alcohol abuse within academic institutions in order to get a scope of the preexisting research. These scholars draw upon many articles that discuss the frequent use of alcohol related activities in conjunction with fraternity and sorority membership. In their methods, they used anonymous documents that were passed out and made available to the entire student body in order to collect their sample. This study asked various questions dealing with alcohol use and other at risk activities. These questions also included affiliation with greek organizations and gender. It was found in almost every category that greek affiliated members were more likely to participate in alcohol abuse and interact with other at risk behaviors stating that, “results of the model indicate that fraternity and sorority members are over two times as likely to be injured as compared to non-Greek students” (332). Through this study, their aim to illustrate greek members as having alcohol abuse was successful, by proving that, yes, greek members were more likely to participate in abusive behaviors toward alcohol. However, the authors admit to the study’s implications, and that these results also showed that non-greek

affiliated members were also just as likely to participate in these behaviors. In total, scholars still attempt to explain a correlation between the two ideas of alcohol use and greek affiliation.

If there is so much negative media in relation to greek life, why do these organizations continuously gain membership? In the article "Practicing "sorority Rush": Mockery and the Dramatistic Rehearsing of Organizational Conversations," Dean Scheibel, Katie Gibson, and Carrie Anderson discuss how sororities, much like organizations, go through a recruiting process. This article aims to break down the rehearsing and mockery process that is used during the maintenance of the organization. The term mockery is used synonymously with the word "caricature". The authors state in their observations that, "mockery is used to practice future conversations, and is analogous to the role-playing that takes place in training exercises (Cooke, 1987)" (222) and it is also mentioned that this mockery may also take the form of anticipated situations that occur during the recruitment process. Mainly this article aims to show how the sorority mockery of recruitment is similar to that of organizations which can be illustrated through the authors stating that, "This suggests that the leaders of training activities use mockery differently than those engaged in less formal organizational activities" (231). These activities bring light to those members who have status within the organization but also allow for those with leadership positions to take some control of the situation and outcome of the process. This article is one of the first to take the forceful nature of a sorority and show the good it can have on a member's experience.

Faith Kurtyka, in her article "'Get Excited People!': Gendered Acts of Literacy in a Social Sorority", focuses on Polly, and the gendered leadership role that she has created for herself while acting as an executive member within her social sorority. In particular, the study

focused on leadership and the connection between sororities and other leadership roles outside of the sorority environment and evaluating the texts produced while within these different groups. Polly was interviewed at the end of her term as a leader within the sorority. In this interview, Polly was asked about her writing choices while carrying out her position. By analyzing the language Polly used in order to communicate with the sorority members, Kurtyka and her research assistant were able to see themes and concluded that as a woman, Polly used language that helped her hedge topics and made her seem less threatening. The researchers stated that, “The silly, almost child-like nature of Polly’s sense of humor establishes her identity within the group in a way that is nonthreatening to both the membership and the organization, allowing her to play around with the seriousness of her leadership role” (8). Ultimately, the case came to an understanding that Polly was well aware of her rhetorical strategies when writing; which affected the identity she took on as a leader while addressing the sorority members.

In considering these sources, it is important for me to question why and how this is the most prevalent information being circulated. It is hard for me to imagine that former greek members have written this demeaning information about greek life. In fact, many sources note that they had special permission to do research with these groups in order to gather their research. These sources specifically look at sororities and identities but through an outsider’s point of view. This outside perspective leaves out how these organizations function from the inside and what dictates them to do so. I aim to focus on this action of looking from the inside. Therefore, my research on this topic might be able to dive in deeper and give further more descriptive reasoning to the ways in which sororities function because of my past and current involvement with the greek organization. Many times this outsider perspective that is taken with

the other scholarship prevents the researcher from having access or knowledge on the topics they are trying to discuss or dive into. My knowledge on this topic, because of my membership, allows me to ask more precise questions, or push on other topics that cannot be seen from the surface. This scholarship aims not only to give an internal perspective but also, aims to give another positive set of research to sorority research that is currently being circulated.

A Personal Perspective

Ever since I was a prospective student tailgating at the football games at Auburn University, I would see the sorority members dressed up for the game wearing their greek letters on a nicely decorated button. Figures 5, 6, and 7 illustrate what I was seeing on game day.



Figure 5 comprises of a Delta Zeta button from Auburn University (Delta Zeta)



Figure 6 illustrates a Gamma Phi Beta button from Auburn University (Gamma Phi Beta)



Figure 7 contains a personal photo of Auburn University Kappa Alpha Theta members wearing their buttons on game day

These buttons indicated which girls were members of a sorority. It not only identified these girls as members of the sorority, but it proved to me that they belonged. It felt as though being in a sorority was part of the college experience (especially the game day experience at a large athletic university), and in my mind it continued the caricature of sorority life that I had always envisioned and assumed to be true. When it actually came time for me to go to college, it was more than the button that made me want to join a sorority—it was the need for friendship, and the unknown. Auburn University was eight hours from my hometown, and although I was going to the school I had always dreamed of attending, I didn't know anyone, so, I went through sorority recruitment to attempt to make an easier transition.

After going through the sorority recruitment process I received a bid ⁴to a sorority. The first semester involved with the sorority was rocky as I attempted to find my place with 96 other new members. It was the first time that I had felt like I had to make a name for myself. After the rules were declared, we signed agreements, and we were expected to attend chapter⁵ meetings and events at a certain time and place —girls began to drop the organization and lose their membership because affiliation included so much more than they expected.

The same reasons that girls were dropping was the main reason why I stayed. Those mandatory chapter meetings at 5:30 encouraged me to make new friends and helped organize the events I would attend the following week. The social events with other fraternities and sororities allowed me to network with people across the university. Watching executive members present their information to the chapter encouraged me to get involved. Membership allowed me to have structure in my crazy life as a college freshman. Sorority membership gave me an opportunity to be apart of a national organization. As I encountered all these experiences, it was always through communication and writing that these activities were possible. Looking back, it wasn't the surface level aspects of sorority membership, like the dress or the caricature of greek life, it was the ability to communicate and network within a nationally recognized organization that encouraged me to stay. For example, going to chapter and taking notes for the upcoming events and requirements facilitated to make me into an active participating member.

⁴ A bid is a formal invitation to join the sorority.

⁵ Chapter is a term used for the formal business meetings that are required of every sorority.

My initial interest in being in the sorority was with the button. Then, it was the desire to make friends and feel like I belonged. Ultimately sorority membership gave me more than just being in the organization and having a button. Through my time as an active member, I participated in a few leadership roles. My spring semester of freshman year I was chosen to serve as a Member Educator Assistant (MEA) in the Fall for the new members. In this role, I was mentoring and leading the new members through their first months within the sorority. I helped the members get acclimated with the sorority and I attended all of the new member meetings and new member events. I held this position for the beginning of my sophomore and junior year, and I saw the effects of membership on the incoming members. I participated in all the events the new members were a part of and I was able to see how membership within the sorority was obtained through a more observing perspective. It was not only through initiation that these girls gained membership, but they learned about the parts that created our collective identity and history.

After recruiting for the first time, my sorority found that recruiting new members was something that I excelled in. Going into my junior year, I was chosen to participate on the recruitment committee. This included setting up and ordering supplies for the recruitment week and also being a leader through the recruiting process for the girls that were recruiting for the first time. I held this position junior and senior year, and this position helped me look at how recruitment happened. Even the little things like what flowers we chose to have on preference day had an effect on how we identified ourselves. This is where I learned about how visual rhetorics played a major part within our organization I found this position extremely fulfilling

because I was helping shape an identity for our organization to be seen as during the recruitment week.

Sorority membership was more than attending meetings and being a leader, it was also about being involved in other areas. Throughout my sophomore to senior year, I was the captain of the intramural volleyball team. I was responsible for communicating to the girls about the times of the games but I was also leading the girls while we were on the volleyball court. I also competed in Greek Sing my sophomore and junior year. Greek Sing is a sorority dance competition that raises money for Habitat for Humanity. Being involved in this activity required going to dance practices two days a week and competing in the final dance. Being a part of the extracurricular aspects of the organization taught me about communication effectiveness within the sorority. As a coach, I was able to see first-hand how my communication skills were being perceived. During Greek Sing, I saw how effective communication within a group made us, quite literally, move as a cohesive whole.

However, the most relevant activity I was involved in during my sorority membership was participating on the bylaws committee. Two girls from every pledge class⁶ were selected to represent the entire group. Once we were selected we met at various times over the course of a month to go over sections of the bylaws to check to make sure they were in concordance with the values of the chapter. While in this role, I specifically took an interest in how the language we

⁶ When new members receive their bids to the sorority the groups of new members are identified as a pledge class (regardless of age). For instance, sorority recruitment is attended by incoming freshman; however, upperclassmen are welcome to attend. If a junior goes through with the freshman she is still part of the freshman pledge class.

were using had a direct effect on the way our sorority functions. In many cases, certain wording could have implications on a sister's membership if it was not thought out carefully. For instance, if the bylaws stated that if a girl didn't make a certain GPA she would get terminated, and there weren't specifics about when and how, the member would immediately be removed without the interference of the chapter. If the language provided for the interference of the chapter then a girl could be saved even though her GPA wasn't met for a semester. After the bylaws were amended it was presented to the chapter for further review and acceptance. During this leadership role I was able to see the importance of the bylaws. The bylaws were set to keep the organization organized and disciplined. I was able to see what each bylaw had control over and how it could have implications on membership. I would read about how the bylaws made us attend certain events, and be punished for particular activities. Many times members do not ever really read or see the bylaws. For example, many women didn't know that they were required to live in the sorority house or hall if they were on the executive board, so girls would sign leases off campus. It is only when a bylaw is coming into action to address a certain situation that a sister will encounter the bylaw. Through having a role in this activity I was able to see how the language of the bylaws govern the sorority, and see how these bylaws could have major effects on the members and the group as a whole.

Through understanding the bylaws in all capacities, I found that these governing documents were full of information and rhetoric to make the members function and act accordingly. Not only did these documents dictate the actions of the members, but also helped create an identity for those members in leadership positions. This rhetoric helped organize and give order to the group and those participating in membership. The definition that I have given to organizational

rhetoric can be applied to these bylaws to give a better understanding of organizational rhetoric in action. However, it is important to understand the background of organizational rhetoric and the room there is to expand on the relationship of this concept.

Organizational Rhetoric

The term Organizational Rhetoric is an expression that is used across many disciplines. The field of communication is one of the most common places to find this term being used. Ironically, although the word “rhetoric” is within the term, organizational rhetoric is not used as often within the field of composition and rhetoric. Mary Hoffman and Debra Ford use this term in their work *Organizational Rhetoric: Situations and Strategies*. In the introduction, they define the term Organizational Rhetoric. They do this by creating definitions for the individual words the term makes up: organization and rhetoric. They begin by defining rhetoric stating, “[f]or our purposes, rhetoric can be understood as the strategic use of symbols to generate meaning. To say that rhetoric is, “strategic” is to emphasize that messages are created to accomplish a goal (4). This definition of rhetoric suggests that rhetoric is being used as a tool. By stating that rhetoric is a strategy or tool it can be said that rhetoric can be used as a way to create something, but also to take something apart. It is important to look at how we can not only use rhetoric in trying to create ideas, actions and identities, but it is also important to use rhetorical strategies to understand why and how our written works are being created. Part of the focus of organizational rhetoric might be in the sense that as scholars, we have been too busy looking at how rhetoric is created within groups and organizations, but we have also failed to look at how rhetoric is used to pull apart what is already being used within these groups, in order to understand what and how actions are facilitated within the organization.

Understanding this use of rhetoric as a form of strategic persuasion in order to accomplish a goal, Hoffman and Ford are then able to move on and establish a definition for organization. They are sure to mention that the use of “organization” is more than just the business corporation point of view. Primarily the definition of “organization” comes from Chester Barnard. Hoffman and Ford explain that Barnard “argued that people form organizations because they lack the power to accomplish some of their goals independently” (6). If we expand by looking at groups and organizations that go beyond business categories we can begin to understand how other groups, other than business corporations, are functioning. Regardless of how we classify the groups and organizations we dissect it should reveal the different ways rhetoric is being used in order to help each group and organization to function in a certain way. Like I have mentioned before, rhetorical studies are interested in looking at more than just the academic environment. In the same way, organizational rhetoric aims to look at more than just a corporate business environment.

Combining the definitions of these concepts, Hoffman and Ford came to the final definition for organizational rhetoric by stating, “Organizational rhetoric is the strategic use of symbols by organizations to influence the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of audiences important to the operation of the organization” (8). This is where I see room for the conversation of where organizational rhetoric can grow. Understanding the strategic use of symbols, in both creating and pulling apart the text, we can organize and understand how they are important to the ways in which groups, businesses, and organizations alike are influenced by rhetoric. Throughout the text, Hoffman and Ford note the different ways in which organizational rhetoric can be used or displayed. This use of the terminology *organizational rhetoric* allows for scholars

like myself to take a rhetorical lens to the organization's document analyze how the group is using rhetoric to carry out functions and actions in an organized fashion.

Studying Organizational Rhetoric of Sororities

This thesis offers a rhetorical analysis of the bylaws of Kappa Alpha Theta at the University of Central Florida (Eta Theta Chapter). By using this case study, it can help define the term organizational rhetoric using a more rhetorically bound foundation. This is in hopes to not take the term organizational rhetoric from the communications field, but to add the term to the writing and rhetoric field. In addition, this study will also add to the scholastic conversation of greek life organizations using a more positive direction.

Chapter Overviews

In the next chapter I will describe the theories and methods I use to guide the rhetorical analysis of the sorority bylaws. I will begin by looking at the overall theory of organizational rhetoric and its place within my case study. The second part of chapter two will outline a discussion of both James Paul Gee and Jack Selzer. This part of the chapter will go over the methods that guide this case study.

Chapter three will look at organizational rhetoric within the bylaws. I will talk about how Hoffman and Ford, along with my own, definition of organizational rhetoric is displayed within the bylaws and how the sorority is practically using this concept. In particular, I will talk about Faith Kurtyka and her study of Polly and how her study has connections to sorority bylaws and supports the claims that I am making along with the aspects it misses and goes against.

Chapter four will examine at the rhetorical situation and analysis of the sorority bylaws. In this section I will discuss the concept “Every(one)” and it’s use for analyzing the bylaws. This chapter has been divided into the following two sections: “*Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “Every” within the Sorority*” which explores the representation of the sorority in its entirety, and “*Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “One” within the Sorority*”, which explores how the bylaws encourage and effects individual members.

The final chapter will explain the implications the analysis has on organizational rhetoric and show what this study can help scholars within the composition and rhetoric fields, along with contributing toward greek life scholarship.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORY AND METHOD

Recent rhetorical studies have an interest in non-academic sites and what they can offer in bringing new knowledge to this academic realm. In this study, I analyze the bylaws from Kappa Alpha Theta from the Eta Theta chapter at the University of Central Florida. This analysis enhances our understanding of organizational rhetoric and its use within a non-academic environment such as a social sorority. In this chapter, I discuss some of the framework of organizational rhetoric, rhetorical analysis (rhetorical criticism), and discourse analysis that has been used throughout the study. I also provide an overview of the sorority as a whole and the bylaws it uses.

My analysis addresses the following research questions:

1. *How does the language in the bylaws mediate the sorority?*
2. *How does the language within the bylaws assert the sorority's identity and values?*
3. *How do the bylaws encourage identification of the sorority as a whole and also with the individuals it affects?*

I chose to focus on Kappa Alpha Theta because of the wealth of knowledge I have developed from my multiple encounters with the sorority both as an active member and alumna. Not only do I have a personal connection to this specific organization but I also had two separate chapters to gather information from (both Auburn University and the University of Central Florida). In the end, I chose to look at Kappa Alpha Theta at the University of Central Florida because of my indirect work with them as the Alumnae Collegiate Liaison. Doing so would also

help me avoid any bias that might occur if I was looking at Auburn University, the chapter I was actively involved in during my undergraduate career.

I wanted to examine the bylaws of the sorority because I was once a member of the bylaws committee, and I remember the great detail that went into choosing the terms and wording that would be used in each line of the bylaws. The bylaws are an excellent source to examine the organization's use of rhetoric. Another reason why I chose to look at the bylaws was because these documents are open to the public. These documents are under review of not only grand council but also through the university and their greek life system. Many documents within any social sorority can fall under the term "ritual" and are not open to the public. These ritual documents are only shared with members who have been given access to the organization and have gone through the initiation process. It would be against Kappa Alpha Theta membership for me to divulge ritual texts to non-members. By looking at the bylaws I do not cross any boundaries with ritual texts. The bylaws are one of the most important documents to the sorority based on its ability to help us function and facilitate membership in the way the sorority sees best. Using the bylaws also indirectly addresses the issues that have been seen within the media along with the reputations sorority life has gained along the way. By looking at the bylaws I am looking directly at the rules that are enforced on the women if there is a problem about a sorority or member's actions. In this respect, I hope to answer some questions to some issues that have come up in the media in lieu of recent events.

Theory

A concrete definition of organizational rhetoric is very elusive. Scholars from different academic disciplines have taken organizational rhetoric to mean a various amount of things. For

the research, I wanted to start with the term “Organizational Rhetoric.” To begin, I wanted to use the term organizational rhetoric over any other option like “business communication” or “technical rhetoric” because I found that these terms typically focus on large corporations and didn’t allow for smaller groups and organizations to fit into the model. However, it was difficult to search and attempt to use the term organizational rhetoric. The term is frequently used in the communications field not composition and rhetoric. Nonetheless, by searching academic works on organizational rhetoric, I was able to find the source *Organizational Rhetoric: Situations and Strategies* by Mary Hoffman and Debra Ford. Through this source I was able to find a definition of organizational rhetoric that I felt aligned best with the work I was planning on doing. Not only was this source excellent to use as a definition for my work, but it also had room for me to use the term through a more rhetorical framework.

While looking for the term organizational rhetoric, there were various other terms being used by the communications field. I encountered terms like, “corporate communication,” “organization communication,” “organization symbolism,” “professional discourse,” “work place writing,” and “technical communication” to name a few. These terms are connected to organizational rhetoric because they are all based on the organizations and writing. However, they didn’t allow for a rhetorical framework.

Researchers use these terms for various reasons. Authors such as, Stephen Bremner and Cheryl Geisler, study activity theory with this terminology. Researchers like, Teresa M. Harrison and Krishna S. Dhir look at how corporations and businesses use rhetoric to simply communicate effectively. Some even look at the discourse and the types of genres that occur within the organization. But because I was teaching about discourse communities in my ENC 1102 courses,

I wanted to do more than an expansive view of a discourse community. What all this research has in common is that written communication occurs in corporate business environments. They look at the types of genres that are used, they analyze why these genres are produced, and the outcome the genres have on the organization, but there is more to it than just seeing that communication occurs.

I want to push further. Written communication occurs in business environments. The types of genres they use are successful for various amounts of reason. I want to take what is happening in these sororities, much like it happens in business, and look at how the rhetoric in their documents inflicts structure into the organization and makes their members act and respond in certain ways. Defining organizational rhetoric in a way that looks at how the specific language has an effect on the members allows for a better understanding of rhetorical strategies within the organization.

Method

Overall, I wanted to look at this study through a rhetorical analysis focused closely on discourse. In doing a rhetorical analysis I am doing just that—analyzing the rhetoric. Since I am trying to redefine organizational rhetoric through a more rhetorically bound means, it is important for me to look directly at the rhetoric being used. I chose rhetorical analysis as a tool because it allows for the researcher to look at the phrases line by line. Each section is analyzed for the language and rhetoric used to ensue particular responses from its audience. Rhetorical analysis is also helpful in finding terminology that helps clarify areas of the “every(one)”, which consider the organization in its entirety and also the individuals it effects.

While rhetorical analysis is able to look at the organization and the individuals through a line by line analyzation of the language, there are other types of analysis that consider additional aspects. A genre analysis would have me focus on the broader sense of how the genre of the bylaws work. It was important for me to stick to looking at the language that was being used instead of the genre as a whole. One could argue that I am also trying to do research on activity theory. Although I do look at the activities the sorority participates in (specifically the action the members take after agreeing to the bylaws) my bigger goal was to look at the specific language that mediates that activity. If I chose to do activity theory it would be about how the bylaws as a whole document, make the members act. Instead, I want to look at how specific lines of the document are structured, what they suggest, and how they can ultimately make the members act and function in a certain way. I found that using discourse analysis I was able to do this line-by-line analysis that was able to illuminate this function that I was looking for.

Through Jack Selzer's article "Rhetorical Analysis: Understanding How Texts Persuade Readers", in the anthology *What Writing Does and How It Does It* by Charles Bazerman and Paul Prior, I gained my understanding of rhetorical analysis. Selzer explains that this framework can be used if "those pieces of writing have a persuasive intent, especially if (in other words) they have designs on your beliefs and attitudes (and nearly all writing does have that purpose, to some extent), the activity known as rhetorical analysis can offer you additional perspective and understanding" (279). It is important for me to follow the framework that rhetoric is not just about persuasion but in fact, can help illuminate the ways in which a particular person or group is hoping their audience will react. In fact, Selzer later states that "In short, rhetoric can be understood as both a productive and interpretive enterprise" (280) meaning that not only can we

create using rhetoric but we can interpret by using it. Selzer addresses how things like the rhetorical situation are important to consider while using a rhetorical analysis. This overall concept of the rhetorical situation is the beginning of the rhetorical analysis and can help analysts grasp the information they are attempting to analyze.

After looking at the rhetorical situation of the bylaws, Selzer explains that there are two different types of analysis that can take place: textual and contextual (283). Textual analysis is explained as, “analyses that concentrate more on texts than contexts. They typically use one or another kind of rhetorical terminology as a means of careful analysis of a single symbolic act considered on its own discrete terms” (283). This means that a line by line analysis will be used and sentence level details should all be considered while looking at the Kappa Alpha Theta bylaws. However, for contextual analysis Selzer explains that, “[c]ontextual rhetorical analysis, however, as an attempt to understand communications through the lens of their environments, does attend to the setting or scene out of which any communication emerges. It does strive to understand an object of analysis as an integral part of culture” (291-2). Using the contextual rhetorical analysis will help readers and myself as the researcher understand why the authors of Kappa Alpha Theta craft the bylaws and in what ways that has implications on what is written. Selzer clearly states that, “Indeed, many if not most analysts operate some place between these two extremes [contextual and textual rhetorical analysis]” (302). I will be participating as a researcher between those two extremes as I aim to address the implications of rhetorical analysis in both the contextual and textual realms within the sorority’s bylaws.

As Jack Selzer is the larger framework for showing what and how I aim to look at rhetorical analysis, James Paul Gee and his work *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory*

and Method helps not only frame the ideas of discourse analysis through my study, but also brings in the element of identity. In the beginning of his work, he states that, “[i]n language, there are important connections among saying (informing), doing (action), and being (identity)” (2). This concept is something that I addressed and is a major part of the bylaws. The nature of this document allows for me to show what the bylaws are informing, doing, and ultimately one of my larger points is to show how the bylaw’s language influences the member’s identity. Gee suggests that through the ideas of saying, doing, and being, language gains its meaning. With sorority membership and within the evidence of the bylaws there are examples of how the bylaws “say” something, the girls act in a certain way or become a certain person and through this the language gains credibility and purpose.

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYZING THE RHETORICAL SITUATION OF THE BYLAWS

Before diving into the rhetorical analysis, several rhetoricians (Selzer, Bitzer, Vatz, Consigny, Grant-Davie) have stated that there is an importance in finding the rhetorical situation of the document. It is important to look at the rhetorical situation because it gives a better overall understanding to the bylaws and what they are striving to do since the rhetorical situation gives context to the document. Knowing about the bylaws isn't as helpful as looking at the details the rhetorical situation can provide. In saying this, the following paragraphs lay out the rhetorical situation of the Kappa Alpha Theta--Eta Theta Chapter bylaws.

Jack Selzer in his chapter, "Rhetorical Analysis: Understanding How Texts Persuade Readers", goes over the different aspects of conducting a rhetorical analysis. Selzer explains that when beginning the rhetorical analysis, it is helpful to look at the overall rhetorical situation of the document. By understanding the rhetorical situation, it can help the analyst have a better lens to look at the document that is being analyzed. Being able to apply the rhetorical situation for the document allows for a more critical reading approach that will give a more comprehensive look into what the authors were trying to do.

According to Selzer the rhetorical situation consists of "the circumstances of subject, audience, occasion, and purpose" (282). This definition of the rhetorical situation is helpful, but I will also use Keith Grant-Davie to extend Selzer's notion of the rhetorical situation. In Grant-Davie's piece "Rhetorical Situations and Their Constituents" he suggests that there are four aspects to the rhetorical situation-- Exigence, Rhetor, Audience, and Constraints, that he has

adapted and amended through Lloyd F. Bitzer, Richard E. Vatz and Scott Consigny. These ideas provided by Grant-Davie address the concept of rhetorical situation that Selzer has proposed along with the additional concepts of the rhetor and constraints. The rhetor and constraints are an important addition to the application of the rhetorical situation of this document because of their impact and specific role within the document that is being evaluated.

Rhetorical Situation of Sorority Bylaws

The rhetorical situation of the sorority bylaws will be discussed in the order in which I believe they are experienced through the sorority. I will start by discussing the exigence of the document, followed by the rhetor, then the audience, and finally the constraints of the sorority bylaws.

Rhetorical Situation— Exigence

Grant-Davie explains that exigence is a goal that a discourse is trying to reach. It is the driving force to a document or action coming to fruition. In particular he adds that “values” are a part of this driving force. Exigence also addresses that there is a sense of time and urgency to these creations. And finally that this action is trying to accomplish something in particular (Grant-Davie 351-353). In particular, Grant-Davie asks three questions to help understand the exigence of a discourse. He asks, “What is the discourse about?”, “Why is the discourse needed?”, “What is the discourse trying to accomplish?”

For the sorority bylaws the exigence comes from the necessity to have a binding document, a common denominator for this national and international sorority. Kappa Alpha Theta, specifically, has over 100 active chapters nationally and internationally (Theta Website).

The bylaws are used as a document that helps provide consistency across many different universities. If the sorority did not have these rules and guidelines to follow the sororities wouldn't build a sense of community or be held to the same standards. Instead each chapter would formulate their own rules and guidelines which would lead to many disorganized organizations that would not hold the same high esteem that the national organizations attempt to present. For this, the sorority bylaws would be answering the question for why this discourse is needed.

The bylaws not only provide consistency to all of the chapters, but it also is a way for the sorority to provide rules that can be adjusted accordingly by each university. Because each chapter is sent a bylaws form that allows for particular aspects to be changed, each chapter is allowed to assert which values are most important to them, and also set rules for situations that occur only at particular universities (for instance, some universities have houses others do not). This driving force allows sororities to have structure while allowing each chapter to claim their own identities and values, while remaining within concordance of our headquarters expectations.

Rhetorical Situation—Rhetor

Grant-Davie explains that the rhetor can encompass many different ideas, but simply put the rhetor is the person that is presenting the information or document. Through using ethos the rhetor gains credibility with the audience, and the audience believes the information to be truth based on this trust of shared information.

In the sorority bylaws the rhetor could be most notably understood as a document coming from headquarters. This document is created at headquarters and discussed at Grand Council. Because this information is presented as “rules” most members associate this document with

headquarters. To identify further, the members think this document comes from the president of the organization. Members may also believe that the advisors and president of the chapter are responsible for this document. Others might also think that the bylaws committee is responsible for delivering this information. The executive board for the sorority might see that on the first page of the document that it is to be returned to the compliance chair, and believe that the document is coming from that woman. Overall, any of these beliefs give credibility and fortitude to the document.

Rhetorical Situation—Audience

Grant-Davie is sure to inform his reader that audiences can take many different forms and include various groups of people. For sororities this is no different. From my understanding there are six different audiences for this document. I will explain these audiences from the broadest to the most specific.

The first audience that will encounter this document is headquarters, the board and most importantly the president and compliance chair of the organization. Headquarters will encounter this document after it has been reviewed and changed by the specific chapter. The president and compliance chair will specifically overview the article to see that the changes made to the document are realistic and meanwhile maintain the overall values of the sorority.

Advisors for the specific chapter will receive this information from headquarters and they will review the document. The chapter advisor will review the document to see if there are any changes that need to be made based on the necessities of the particular chapter. In particular, they will look for sections that headquarters has suggested changes to be made. After reviewing the

document, the advisors will contact the executive board of the chapter to talk about the document's necessary changes.

The executive board will review the document to understand what is expected from the chapter, however, they will not make any changes. Each specific leadership position and committee head will review the document for their specific role with the regulations from headquarters. Some sections have a more direct effect on certain positions than others (for instance, the CRO—or chief recruiting officer—will need to look at the sections that deal with the rules about conducting recruitment more so than looking at the information on how the facility management will be conducted).

The bylaws committee will be the next audience for this document. In particular, this is the most influential audience. The bylaws committee will take the document read it from top to bottom and look at the areas that have been suggested to change. It is almost as if this committee annotates the text and is working with the text in comparison to the other positions that just read the text. This group makes the changes then presents the changes to the chapter.

The chapter and each specific member are the farthest removed from the document. Most members do not read the bylaws. As I have mentioned before, most of the members encounter the document when they are being enforced with a rule from the document. The chapter will find that some rules will affect the group as a whole. Other rules only effect one individual at a time.

Because there are so many audiences for the bylaws it is important that the document maintains a tone that can be understood, appreciated, and followed by all.

Rhetorical Situation—Constraints

Constraints are an interesting and complex concept to bring into the rhetorical situation. Grant-Davie explains that, “Constraints are the hardest of the rhetorical situation components to define neatly because they can include so many different things” (356). His use of the term constraints comes from Bitzer defining them he states that,

“his [Bitzer’s] use of the term *constraints* has usually been interpreted to mean limitations on the rhetor—prescriptions or proscriptions controlling what can be said, or how it can be said, in a given situation. However, this commonly held view of constraints as obstacles or restrictions has obscured the fact that Bitzer defined constraints more as aids to the rhetor than as handicaps. The rhetor “harnesses: them so as to constrain the audience to take the desired action or point of view. This view of constraints seem useful, so I see them as working either for or against the rhetor’s objectives” (357).

This view that constraints can work against and in the favor of the rhetor is particularly why I chose to use Grant-Davie’s example of the rhetorical situation in conjunction with Selzer.

In the sorority bylaws there are a few ways that constraints can be illustrated. The first constraint is that headquarters must understand that each chapter is different and the atmosphere of greek life changes across each unique university. For instance, some universities are heavily populated with greek life members, others look down on greek life activities. In understanding that each chapter is unique, headquarters is then responsible for crafting a document that provides room for each chapter to participate in creating their own image and work with the document using their own discretion. This means that headquarters has to know what sections to allow to be changed. It might be difficult for them to set guidelines when each chapter is allowed to have a different opinion or view.

Not only is each sorority unique in that they are a part of a separate Panhellenic system at each university, but also each sorority has their own set of assets and values. Some universities have houses that must be taken care of, other chapters value grades over fines, some chapters are allowed to participate in continuous open bidding⁷. Ultimately, all these aspects are something that headquarters must consider while making up the document for each chapter.

Now that there is a clearer understanding for these documents and their purpose, audience and presenter, constraints, and the overall deeper understanding for what these documents are used for, I can move onto the line by line breakdown for analysis. However, although I will be breaking down the document line by line it would be tedious and useless if there wasn't another filter for analyzing this document. In particular, I set another framework for taking apart and understanding the analysis. In the next chapter I will explain the framework and dive into the analysis of the sorority bylaws.

⁷ Continuous open bidding (COB) is a term used when a chapter participates in recruitment after the recruitment process. This can happen during the Spring semester, or a few weeks after initial recruitment. Some sororities elect to participate in COB if their chapter did not reach new member quota. Sororities are not required to COB.

CHAPTER FOUR: “EVERY(ONE)” TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF SORORITY BYLAWS

The idea for Every(one) came a few years ago when I came up with a theme for our high school yearbook. I wanted to highlight each group and club for its ability to create unity and oneness, but I also wanted to identify and spotlight one particular member and their identity within the group. We could get an understanding of the group not only as a whole but as well as the individuals it impacts. What I was trying to do was look at more than the school as a whole without losing sight of the individuals. Looking at the entire school becomes challenging because there are groups and individuals that can be overlooked. By adopting the idea of “every(one)” I am narrowing the scope of the project. Looking at one group at a time and the people it affects allows for the opportunity to find a richer place for information.

As we began talking about the bylaws and the sorority, I found a similar connection to my previous notion of every(one). Because there are so many moving parts within the sorority, it is valuable to use this scope of the “every(one)”. As an organization and unit they form the *every*. Nonetheless each individual member that makes up the sorority creates their own identity as the *one*. Not only does this help narrow the point of research but, “every(one)” can be used as a sliding scale. For instance, the “one” could be individuals that are within the organization, but it can represent an individual chapter which is part of the “every” considering the social sorority organization as a whole.

The concept of “every(one)” can be used in multiple environments. For instance large organizations that are comprised of franchises could use this sliding scale to address situations

within their company. This concept can also help during research of large groups and organizations. By splitting the organization into sectors of the “one” it can provide for a better understanding for the parts that create the identity of the organization as a whole.

This chapter has therefore been divided into two sections: “*Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “Every” within the Sorority*” and “*Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “One” within the Sorority*”. While looking at the Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity⁸ bylaws I will primarily focus on three different Article numbers within the document. The following sections will be analyzed: “Article I Name and Object,” “Article II Membership,” and “Article III Officers”.

⁸ Note that Kappa Alpha Theta is a women’s *fraternity*. In 1860 they were founded as the first women’s fraternity. Because they are social group composed of all women they are categorized as a sorority.

Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “**Every**” within the Sorority

In the sorority bylaws the first important construction of identity is in creating an overall understanding that this document is in effect of all Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity members. In Article I the bylaws give a specified look at what chapter these bylaws effects and who is included within these guidelines. It also gives a lens for members to read this document with. Section 1 creates the name of the sorority chapter (Eta Theta) that members from this organization respond to. Nevertheless, Section 2 gains more perspective in creating an identity for the members to follow. Section 2 states that,

“The object of Eta Theta Chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta shall be to represent Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity on the Campus of University of Central Florida and to fulfill the purposes of the Fraternity as stated in the *Kappa Alpha Theta Constitution*, 2014 edition”
(See Appendix for Bylaws pg.1, Section 2)

This statement is to give the specific group, in this case, Eta Theta, a purpose and focus on their membership. By telling the members there is an object to their membership it helps the members gain purpose. Gaining purpose, they are able to identify as a group. For instance, although the members might not all have the same reasons for joining the organization by using the term “object” the bylaws give the members a common tangible goal that builds them together as a unit. This guiding mission statement is what connects the members to the identity of the “every”. With any mission statement, all of those involved with the organization attempt to abide by it.

Continuing with this phrase the bylaws state that the object of the Eta Theta chapter is to “...represent Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity on the campus of University of Central Florida...”. By telling the members their goal is to *represent* the organization forces the members to try to work and function as a cohesive group. Although it is difficult to have a group comprised of different members coming from diverse backgrounds, telling the members their goal is to represent the fraternity, it encourages good behavior by the members. Illustrating to the members that they are one member in a large group they are likely to understand that their behavior is a representative for the organization as a whole. The bylaws are also there to clarify that this chapter’s specific goal is to create a representation of Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity on the specific campus of University of Central Florida (UCF). Although membership crosses geographical bounds, it allows the task of representation to sit at a more local level. In a network of girls having the task of representing the group on this particular campus facilitates for the girls to focus on building their own franchise on this specific college campus.

The final phrase finishes the statement by saying not only is representation of the group important, but part of the other goal of the chapter is to “fulfill the purposes of the Fraternity as stated in the *Kappa Alpha Theta Constitution*, 2014 edition”. Although I did not use the sorority constitution in tandem with the bylaws because it contains information that cannot be disclosed for secrecy, I can explain that the constitution is a mix of material on specific Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity ideals, and also includes information that is available in the bylaws. The phrase “fulfill the purposes of the Fraternity...” is in relation to these ideals. These ideals are held sacred to Kappa Alpha Theta members; however, after the initiation process every member would be able to understand what this statement means. Using this phrase, it gives the document exclusivity to

initiated members. Because the document is using a lexis that is familiar to initiated members, it creates a key to unlock the document and give authority for using this document as a guideline to proper sorority membership. Finally, by saying "...2014 edition" It enlightens members to the year in which these guidelines can be enforced. Although it's not necessary, it gives the document authority while it is within the applied year. It also suggests that this document is constantly being amended and changed according to the needs of the sorority. Knowing that the document is being altered based on the specific chapter gives the members a feeling that there is an identity that is specifically being crafted for this chapter.

In Article II, "Membership", the bylaws breaks this section down into four sections—"Chapter Membership Classes"; "Eligibility for Membership"; "Election to Membership"; "Member Orientation Program". In the section "Chapter Membership Classes", the bylaws discuss the different levels of being a member of Kappa Alpha Theta (Active, Inactive, Unaffiliated⁹). For understanding the instances of "**every**" within the organization it is pertinent to look at what this section says about *active* members. By stating that a member is active, it suggests that they are moving and participating within the group and organization. Because I stated earlier that Article I gives the member's a lens, it can be stated that being active means that the member is actively trying to reach the common goal of representing Kappa Alpha Theta on the University of Central Florida's campus.

⁹ Affiliation occurs when members transfer across different universities. For instance, if a member from the Alpha chapter transfers to the Beta chapter she can chose to affiliate at that university. Making her a Beta member although she was not initiated at that institution.

Article II, Section 1, a, clarifies that, “Active membership shall include initiated or affiliated members of Eta Theta Chapter who are enrolled at University of Central Florida and who have not been granted inactive status”. Although the group is comprised of individual active members, I declare that this group of active members is what helps make this organization what it is. Membership can vary from member to member, but active and affiliated status means that these members are actively participating as a part of the specific organization.

However, by being a part of the organization is not limited to paying dues. In this section I will explain that active membership allows for the group and its members to participate in events by proving that they are more than a dues paying member, but they actually show up and act within not only the sorority, but the campus as a whole. By doing so, it encourages the members to fulfill their common goal of being representatives of Kappa Alpha Theta on the University’s campus.

Section 2, c, gives readers and members the “Attendance Requirements”. Requiring members to attend events the organization is not only able to create team building activities within the members of the sorority, but also assists in having Kappa Alpha Theta representation on campus. When members show up to events it is because they are assigned or they know there are repercussions¹⁰ they are more likely to come to events. Members are also given point incentives to attend later wet events¹¹ that are more appealing to members.

¹⁰ *Article II, Section 2, c and Article VI, Section 3, a*—Bylaws articles and sections completely dealing with fines that occur when not attending events

¹¹ Wet Events are events that contain alcohol

In section 2, c, 2, the structure of the guidelines is very methodical. Each line begins with the word “members”. The use of this word is what helps sisters who identify as active members know what they are expected to do. Members who want to continue active membership are encouraged to participate in these events. For example, in the section called “Chapter” the bylaws state,

CHAPTER

Members are allowed 3 absences per semester.

Members will be fined \$25 after their 3rd absence.

Members are considered late after roll has STARTED.

Members will be fined \$10 for late attendance.

(See Appendix for Bylaws pg. 2, Article 2, Section 2, C)

The repetitive use of the term “member” visually can effect the reader. That repetitive language gives a more business like tone to the language. Also, the use of the term “members” instead of “sisters” is something interesting. Being in a sorority, the members will refer to themselves as “sisters” as opposed to members. If grand counsel used the term “sisters” instead it would give the rules leniency. Sisters give a sense of family, and with family there is a chance to manipulate and change the rules based on the personal feelings of each member. By using the term members, it is inclusive of *all* members, and does not allow for personal feelings to be involved. Therefore, by using the term “members” the organization is able to use this inclusive language that applies to all active members.

In addition to the use of the term “members” phrases like “will” and “are” indicate that these actions will be carried out regardless of each individual. Instead it applies to each “member”

as discussed before. When used in conjunction with members, it is a very direct charge to complete and participate in this action. For instance, in the section Initiation it states that,

INITIATION

Members will attend initiation(s).

Members will be fined \$25 if absent.

(See Appendix for Bylaws pg.2, Article 2, Section 2 C)

By stating “members *will* attend initiation” (emphasis added) it forces members who align themselves as an active member to know that they have no other option than to attend initiation. For phrases that are addressing fines it illustrates that the action will happen regardless of the situation. No matter the statement it shows that all members will be held to this standard. This illustrates the “every” mentality of the organization.

Analyzing the Rhetorical Constructs of Identity Making of the “One” within the Sorority

In analyzing and looking for instances of the **one** I looked for instances where “members” was not a term used. Instead, I looked for places where individual members were called out specifically and given responsibilities that made them have an individual role in the sorority. I also looked for language that gave certain members an ability to create an identity that facilitated in them working toward a leadership position. Particularly the Article titled “Officers” primarily looks at these instances and overall creates an environment for individual members to thrive.

Article III, Section 1, a-x, names all of the elected officers within the organization. This section does not simply name the highest ranking officer position but instead includes all positions that serve within the organization. The members of the organization are given titles that are similar to a business. For instance, the eight highest positions are listed as the following:

- A. Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- B. Chief Administrative Office (CAO)
- C. Chief Education Officer (CEdO)
- D. Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- E. Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)
- F. Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- G. Chief Panhellenic Officer (CPO)
- H. Chief Recruiting Officer (CRO)

(See Appendix for Bylaws pg. 5-6, Article 3, Section 1)

During my time in the organization (2009-2013), headquarters decided to change the titles of the officers which made them more desirable. The names went from ‘president’, ‘vp’, ‘finance officer’ to this more structured business-like terminology. Using this type of language and terminology gives a certain power to the members who fall into these titles. The titles that were used before still held merit, but when the members could say they were the ‘CEO’ of a national organization, it gave it a sense of larger power for when they were looking for jobs in the real world. In this case, using the language encouraged members to take stronger leadership roles within the organization, by not only trying to climb up the ranking, but also gave the members a sense of responsibility for the current role they were in.

The officers are given much more responsibility and are therefore held to a different standard. It is not as though the officers get away with more, but instead are expected to obtain a higher goal. As previously mentioned the members are given requirements for maintaining active membership. Scholarship is one thing that is expected of all its members. For officers specifically, they are expected to maintain a higher GPA. Not only do members have to maintain a GPA for activity within the social organization, but also they must maintain an even higher GPA to maintain active officer standings.

Although the bylaws make the case that all members are held to the same standard, there is a place where individuality can happen. While discussing grades it is also stated that members who do not meet grade qualifications are put on a probation status, and if they do not reach the standard for however many semesters, then the organization can terminate the member. Article 2, Section 2, F clarifies that,

F. Discretionary Probation shall be imposed according to *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, b.

(See Appendix for Bylaws pg.4, Article 2, Section 2, F)

Like all the other statements before, the language used does not allow room for manipulation, or for a member to get out of the requirements; however, the next line makes a different move.

Section 2, G, states that,

G. Discretionary Probation may be imposed by the member development committee¹², according to Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, b, (1). This letter G. should only be added if your chapter has voted to give MDC the authority to impose probation terms. If not, delete all text in both of these fields and change the section letter below to G. Contact your CDD with questions about this.

(See Appendix for Bylaws pg.4, Article 2, Section 2, F)

This clause allows a lot of wiggle room. In particular, this clause is used for all probation situations (i.e. scholastic probation, financial probation, and what can sometimes lead into social probation). Therefore, this statement could be used in almost any situation that may arise. But, what makes this interesting is not that this clause exists, but instead for what this clause can do

¹² Member Development Committee (MDC or Standards) is comprised of current members of the executive board, and selected members from each pledge class. This is in attempts to represent all members. The board also includes one advisor to make sure members are in compliance to the standards of the organization. This group is used as a place to voice comments and concerns from the members. Members can be called into MDC if there is a complaint or concern made about one individual member.

and mean for individual members. As a *one*, members have the opportunity to make their case to MDC. These members, who might I add, have a personal relationship with one another, can potentially save girls from being terminated from the organization. According to Section 2, G, these members are still following the bylaws and concerns of the organization. What the members are doing when creating the possibility for MDC to have a higher authority to probation terms, is in actuality giving individuals an identity and giving members the ability to make their own path in sorority membership. This type of special consideration is not a negative attribute to the sorority. In fact, it is helpful because it allows not only the group to shape itself into the group it wants to be, but it also allows members to have their own identity and feel like they have their own place within the sorority.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINAL THOUGHTS

To define organizational rhetoric in this case study, I was looking for more than rhetoric being used because that is what already is occurring in the field. As rhetorical scholars we learn that rhetoric is everywhere. But I aim to take the notion of rhetoric being everywhere and suggest that organizational rhetoric is a *type* of rhetoric that is being used within organizations and groups to set structure and create identities with their membership. In my case study of the bylaws of the Eta Theta chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta I have shown how it is possible for an organization to rhetorically mold its members, protect its members, and maintain the identity that has been created from its founding constituent.

I will continue to use Hoffman and Ford's definition of Organization and Rhetoric, but I want to take a step further by saying that understanding these two definitions there is still a broad definition given to organizational rhetoric. I would like to add that organizational rhetoric is not the fact that organizations are using rhetoric. There is no denying that. But rather, the type of rhetoric these businesses are using is consistent. Businesses are persuading their members to act in certain ways and to adopt specific identities. They are creating social contracts with their members that they use on a frequent basis to create this rhetoric with their members. Whether or not their members realize it, their employees and members act in particular predetermined ways in order to fit within the regulations of the organization.

Organizations are strategically naming their members to encourage growth, and to create power dynamics within the organization. These documents that contain organizational rhetoric are also creating loop holes to encourage individuality within their membership and also within the organization. Organizational rhetoric through this lens also creates consistency within the group, and encourages members to participate, instead of showing up daily and simply skating by. Organizational rhetoric shouldn't only be discussed because it happens, but should also be discussed for the ways in which it happens, and the results it has within the organization.

For rhetorical studies I am aiming to make a movement towards understanding the different types of rhetoric that we encounter every day. Oftentimes there are statements made towards individuals using rhetoric, but what types of rhetoric are they using? Is the rhetoric they are using being typified? I am making the claim the sororities are using organizational rhetoric because of the typified actions they are making and the actions they are looking for from their membership.

This information and study is not to only give research to rhetorical scholars, but can also be used to help sorority members learn about how this rhetoric is being used within their organization and how their roles within the organization can be used to have the greatest effect. Membership is what continues to make the sorority move and continue to have strength over the years. It is by understanding the tools the organization has that the members can tap into having a strong and successful organization.

Let's look back at the conversation that was made about the negative situations that are surrounding social sororities. It was shown that social sororities were participating with racist behaviors and produced eyebrow raising videos. So what can the understanding of organizational

rhetoric and bylaws address these situations? The bylaws are just one of a sea of other documents that are used within a social sorority. Although they are powerful there are other influences that effect each chapter. The bylaws could address these issues, but it would be on a limited scale. For example, clauses could be made that showed if sorority members were caught participating in discriminatory recruitment practices than the member would be punished accordingly. However, funding for the organization might come from an alumna who has different ideals. These chapters would also stand up to regional ideals that might be difficult to overcome. It would also be difficult to regulate how sorority members address misogynistic values. Overall some areas could do better about punishing these members and controlling these outrageous situations, but that is not to say that these situations wouldn't occur.

Faith Kurtyka's article discusses the language that the members use within the organization. Her article about Polly, a sorority member holding an executive position, and her writing practices helped me shape my ideas about looking at how sorority members used language. Her move to show that communication and navigating leadership roles occurs within the sorority was affirming my beliefs.

Nonetheless, Kurtyka's article does something that is almost regressive toward the social sorority community. Through this article it seems as though it hints toward sorority members being incapable of having professional language while addressing their organization. Although this shows how sorority members create their leadership identities, it still creates a negative response to how sorority members conduct business. Through my study I express how sorority members are capable of working with professional language which was not addressed within Kurtyka's article.

So who do these sorority women become? I wanted to make sure Alpha Phi's members had an opportunity to show that their membership is more than their recent recruitment video.

Some notable Alpha Phi's include the following:

Andrea Wong (<i>Zeta Phi</i> /MIT)	CEO of Lifetime Networks
Kim Kelleher (<i>Iota</i> /Wisconsin)	Worldwide Publisher for TIME
Georgia Nesse Gray (<i>Upsilon</i> / Washburn)	First Female Treasurer for the U.S.
Dorothy Wright Nelson (<i>Beta Delta</i> / UCLA)	Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals

(Famous Phis)

Through this specific work it is also important for me to mention some of the notable Kappa Alpha Theta members of which includes,

Mary Vance Trent (<i>Gamma</i> , Butler University)	First Female (US)Foreign Service Officer
Tillie Kidd Fowler (<i>Delta Zeta</i> / Emory)	U.S House of Representatives (1993-2001)
Tory Robinson Burch (<i>Beta Eta</i> / U.Penn)	Designer/Philanthropist
Nancy Larrick Crosby (<i>Alpha Delta</i> /Goucher College)	Co-Founder of International Reading Assoc.

(Notable Thetas)

It is through their membership and encountering this organizational rhetoric that the members are able to reach their highest potential and achieve these notable roles. It is hard to prove the causality of sorority membership and success within the workplace, but one can speculate, based on the strong correlation of the examples above, that encountering organizational rhetoric as sorority members later effects their approach to their careers. As noted in the analysis section certain phrases, terminologies, and titles are used within the bylaws to set structure and influence member's identities, which later influences their decision to seek out these similar attributes

within their pursued work places. In having exposure to these experiences early in young adulthood, it could be speculated that their approach to later experiences are much more comfortable and contribute to their growing success.

APPENDIX:
ETA THETA, KAPPA ALPHA THETA BYLAWS



Twenty-four Officer Model Chapter Bylaws Form Instructions

The model chapter bylaws are a Microsoft Word form. You will not be able to edit the text outside of the form fields. This should greatly reduce the amount of mistakes made with bylaws as well as reduce the time required for review by your chapter advisors.

To fill in the form simply click on a field and either fill in the needed text or choose from the drop down menu. By tabbing through the form, you will find all fields that need to be completed.

If you would like to make changes to sections that are locked on this form or would like to add additional sections, email the chapter compliance committee chairman, ComplianceChair@kappaalphatheta.org. You will need to provide all of the information about the changes needed and she will edit the working document if she approves them. You will need to email her the document that you have been working on in order for her to add or change anything.

If you have any questions or need assistance please contact your chapter administrative advisor, advisory board chairman, or the chapter compliance committee chairman.

recruitment events, signature philanthropy event, and class meetings during the elections process.

- (2) Valid excuses for missing an event:
- The only valid excuse is a official university class.
 - Other excuses (emergency and illness) will be reviewed by the designated officer - only if notification guidelines are followed
 - Work is not a valid excuse
 - All excuses must be submitted in writing to the appropriate officer (by e-mail or handed to directly, no phone calls or text messages will be accepted).

All forms must be submitted BEFORE the date of the absence.

If notification is not received prior to the event, the absence is unexcused.

- All excuses will be reviewed but not necessarily approved.

CHAPTER

Members are allowed 3 absences per semester.

Members will be fined \$25 after their 3rd absence.

Members are considered late after roll has STARTED.

Members will be fined \$10 for late attendance.

SPIRIT WEEK

Members are considered late after roll call is STARTED.

Members are considered absent after roll if they are more than one hour late.

Members will be fined \$50 a day if absent.

Members will be fined \$25 for late attendance or a half-day.

FORMAL RECRUITMENT WEEK

Members are considered late after roll call is STARTED.

Members are considered absent after roll if they are more than one hour late.

Members will be fined \$100 a day if absent.

Members will be fined \$50 for late attendance or a half-day.

CONTINUOUS OPEN BIDDING (COB)

Members will be fined \$25 if absent.

Members will be fined \$10 for late attendance.

Special consideration will be made if COB event is announced LESS than one week prior to its date.

RITUAL EVENTS

There will be 10 ritual reviews per semester.

Members will be fined \$10 if absent.

Members will receive 5 extra points toward wet events.

Members will attend both pledge and loyalty services.

Members will be fined \$15 if absent.

INITIATION

Members will attend initiation(s).

Members will be fined \$25 if absent.

PHILANTHROPY

Members will attend own philanthropy event and partial proceeds.

Member will be fined \$25 if absent.

EVENTS

Members will be fined \$10 if they sign up to attend a sisterhood event or social event and do not attend that event
Members must e-mail the officer coordinating the event 24 hours prior to the event in order to cancel their attendance and have their \$10 fine waved.

CHAPTER DINNER

Members will be fined \$10 if they sign up for chapter dinner and do not attend.
Members must e-mail the officer coordinating chapter dinner 24 hours prior to chapter dinner in order to cancel their attendance and have their \$5 fine waved.

CHORES

Members who live in the chapter house and receive their first chore strike will be fined \$10 and given an extra chore.
Members who live in the chapter house and receive their second chore strike will be fined \$15 and an extra chore.
Members who live in the chapter house and receive their third chore strike will be fined \$20 and an extra chore.
Every chore strike after the third will be an additional \$5 per fine.

In order to attend a wet event (social, date function, semiformal, formal) a member must continuously earn points throughout the semester. To attend event one, members need to earn 21 points. To attend event two, members need to earn 24 points. To attend event three, members need to earn 27 points. To attend event four, members need to earn 30 points. To attend event five, members need to earn 33 points. All points are now cumulative and are used for the entire semester.

Study Hour Requirements according to GPA

3.500 - 4.000: none
3.350 - 3.499: 4 hours
3.150 - 3.349: 8 hours
2.950 - 3.149: 12 hours
2.750 - 2.949: 16 hours

Point values:

Attending a Sisterhood event (1)
Watching an IM game (1)
Playing in an IM game (2)
Attending a PAN or JR PAN meeting (1)
Attending a Philanthropy Event (2)
Participating in a Philanthropy Event (3)
Dance Performance (4)
Ritual Review (1)
Attending initiation (7)
Attending class meetings (6)
Attending a Theta sponsored Philanthropy Event (5)
Attending a Theta sponsored Partial Proceeds Event (3)
Attending a Recruitment workshop (2)
Attending Loyalty Service (3)
Attending Pledge Induction (3)
Attending Founder's Day (5)

There are no negative points. Members will earn points if events are attended.
Members will not lose points if absent from mandatory events.

Social Director has 24 hours to submit list of attendees to Communications Director for points for wet events. Communications Director will have 24 hours after that to submit points per wet event.

K.I.T.E. Groups

Members will be placed alphabetically in groups for external philanthropy events.

Members will be assigned a group and events throughout each semester.

Member will be fined \$10 for not attending.

Members of the executive committee will not participate as recruitment guides (Rho Gammas) during formal Panhellenic recruitment. Members of the executive committee will serve as "floaters" during recruitment parties. They will remain floaters unless number of PNMs requires executive members for form a recruitment bump group.

D. Service Requirements: Members must complete 10 community service hours per semester to remain in good standing.

E. Automatic Probation

- (1) Financial Probation shall be imposed according to *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, a, (1).
- (2) Scholastic Probation shall be imposed on a member who fails to achieve the chapter's required GPA and shall be in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, a, (2).
- (3) Continued failure to achieve the chapter's scholastic requirements for two of semesters, terms, quarters, or blocks or more semesters (consecutive or non-consecutive) may result in termination of membership. Probation shall be continued until the termination of membership process is completed. If the vote for termination is not initiated, or if the process is not completed for any reason, the member shall remain on probation.
- (4) Each member is required to turn in a grade report from the university/college to the scholarship director by the first chapter meeting of the semester.

F. Discretionary Probation shall be imposed according to *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, b.

G. Discretionary Probation may be imposed by the member development committee, according to *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, b, (1). This letter G. should only be added if your chapter has voted to give MDC the authority to impose probation terms. If not, delete all text in both of these fields and change the section letter below to G. Contact your CDD with questions about this.

II. Termination of Membership shall be in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 3.

Section 3. Election to Membership

- A. Invitations to membership shall be extended to women who meet the qualifications set forth in *Kappa Alpha Theta Constitution*, Article II, Section 2, and in accordance with the regulations of the College Panhellenic procedures and Kappa Alpha Theta procedures.
 - B. Letters of Reference

The procedures for obtaining letters of reference for each potential new member shall be as set forth in *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 2, B.
 - C. Scholastic Requirement

The potential new member shall have a 2.80 cumulative GPA from college or, if the potential new member has been enrolled in college less than one term, a 3.25 cumulative GPA from high school.
 - D. Membership selection procedures shall be in accordance with the *Recruitment Handbook*.
 - E. Policy for Legacies

Legacies participating in recruitment shall be given consideration according to the *Recruitment Handbook*, specifically the Recruitment Policies section, Legacies.
 - F. Election to membership shall be in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Constitution*, Article II, Section 3.
 - G. Acceptance of Invitation

Women accepting invitations to join Kappa Alpha Theta shall do so in accordance with Kappa Alpha Theta policies and be pledged in accordance with the Pledge Service as set forth in the *Kappa Alpha Theta Ritual Book*.
- Section 4. Member Orientation Program

The member orientation program and initiation shall be conducted in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 3 and the *Kappa Alpha Theta Ritual Book*.

ARTICLE III OFFICERS

- Section 1. The officers of Eta Theta Chapter shall be the following, who are slated by the nominating committee, during each elections' process.
- A. Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
 - B. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 - C. Chief Education Officer (CEdO)
 - D. Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

- E. Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)
- F. Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- G. Chief Panhellenic Officer (CPO)
- H. Chief Recruiting Officer (CRO)
- I. Alumnae Engagement Director
- J. Alternate Panhellenic Delegate
- K. Archivist/ Historian
- L. Communications Director
- M. Awards Director
- N. Event Director
- O. Executive Assistant
- P. Facility Management Director
- Q. Finance Assistant
- R. Human Resources Director
- S. IT Director
- T. New Member Director
- U. Recruitment Director
- V. Ritualist
- W. Scholarship Director
- X. Service and Philanthropy Director

Section 2. Requirements for Officers

- A. A member shall meet the conditions for eligibility and qualifications to be an officer as stated in the *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 3, B.
- B. Scholastic Requirements
 - (1) Officers shall maintain a 3.00 semester GPA. The GPA shall not be lower than the GPA required for a chapter member to be in good standing.
 - (2) A chapter officer may be removed from office for the failure to maintain the required officer GPA. Removal of officers shall be conducted in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 3, E.

Section 3. Elections

- A. Elections shall be held annually by the end of fall semester.
 - B. Nominating Procedures
 - (1) An elected nominating committee consisting of two representatives from each college class (or one representative if approved by the college district director) and the chairman of the advisory board, serving as committee chairman without voting privileges, shall meet to prepare the report of the nominating committee which shall be presented at the following chapter meeting. The retiring CEO shall serve ex officio but she shall only have voting privileges in the event of a tie. The retiring CAO shall serve ex officio without a vote.
 - (2) The nominating procedures shall be in accordance with the *College Chapter Handbook*.
 - C. Elections shall be according to the procedures in the *College Chapter Handbook*.
- Section 4. Installation of Officers
- A. Transition and installation of elected officers shall take place in accordance with the *College Chapter Handbook* and *Kappa Alpha Theta Ritual Book*.
 - B. Newly installed officers shall assume their duties no later than March 1 in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 3, D.
- Section 5. Duties of Officers
- The duties of college chapter officers are stated in the *College Chapter Handbook*.
- Section 6. Term of Office
- The term of office for all officers shall be for one year or until a successor is duly elected and installed.
- Section 7. Vacancy in Office
- A. In the case of a vacancy in any office, a successor shall be elected or appointed according to the procedures outlined in the *College Chapter Handbook*.
 - B. In the event the CEO is unable to complete her term of office, the COO shall serve as CEO until a successor is duly elected and installed.
 - C. In case of a vacancy in any other office, another named officer, as outlined in the *College Chapter Handbook*, shall carry on the work of the office until a successor is duly elected and installed.
- Section 8. Removal from Office
- A chapter officer shall be removed from office only in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 3, E.

ARTICLE IV

COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees

- A. The chapter shall have the following standing committees: executive committee, member development committee, risk management team, bylaws committee, finance committee, education committee, executive recruitment board, marketing committee, nominating committee, operations committee, scholarship committee, service committee, administrative committee, and cabinet. These committees shall conduct their business in accordance with the *College Chapter Handbook*.
- B. The chapter has the following other standing committees: Family Weekend committee, Homecoming committee, Greek Week committee, UCF Greek Gala Committee, Bid Day committee, Mother Daughter/Father Daughter Weekend committee, Ritual committee, TOTOGS committee, and Recruitment committee.

Section 2. Committee Member Selection

- A. Committee member assignments with the exception of member development committee will be made according to a method agreed upon by the executive committee with the approval of the advisory board chairman. Potential committee members answer a GIN question indicating their interest and the committee chairmain or the appointed officer determines who is on the committee if there is an overwhelming response.
- B. Selection of the representative(s) to the member development committee shall be in accordance with the policies set forth in the *Development Guide* and is the responsibility and privilege of the COO, with the approval of the exec and ABC.
- C. The member development committee consists of one member from each academic class.

ARTICLE V CHAPTER BUSINESS

- Section 1. The business and affairs of college chapters shall be under the ultimate supervision and control of Grand Council. Chapters shall manage and conduct their business in conformity with such rules and standards as Grand Council will establish. Chapters shall not reply to any general or specific requests, from any source, for the *Fraternity Constitution and Bylaws*. Chapters immediately shall refer the person making the request to the executive director. Generally, only Grand Council has the authority to bind the Fraternity; therefore, a member of a college chapter may not sign a relationship statement or other agreement which would attempt to obligate or bind the Fraternity.

Section 2. Meetings

- A. Meetings shall be held during the regular school terms to transact the business of the chapter, to counsel together for the best interest of the group, and to enhance the spirit of Fraternity loyalty through participation in Fraternity ritual in accordance with *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 5.

- B. The chapter shall meet once a week during each college semester at 7:00 on Sunday in the Chapter House.
 - C. Special meetings may be called by the CEO, by executive committee initiative, by request of three members, or by request of the advisory board chairman or a Fraternity officer. Written notice of the time, place, and exact purpose of the special meeting must be sent to all members by mail or email at least two days in advance of the meeting.
 - D. Chapter meetings may be only postponed or omitted with the approval of the advisory board chairman and only in an emergency. If the chapter is on disciplinary status with the Fraternity, both the advisory board chairman and the college district director must approve any change or cancellation of the chapter meeting.
- Section 3. Quorum
- A simple majority of the active college members shall be present in order to conduct chapter business.
- Section 4. Parliamentary Authority
- The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall be the authority for procedures in all meetings in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and the *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*.
- Section 5. Order of Business
- Song; preamble; Moral Code; roll call by Greek names; minutes of the last meeting; CFO's report; reports of officer and standing committees; unfinished business; new business; Good of the Order; adjournment; Chain Song. (*College Chapter Handbook*)

ARTICLE VI FINANCE

- Section 1. Dues and Fees
- A. The Fraternity initiation fee of one hundred seventy-five dollars (\$175) shall be paid by each new member.
 - (1) Payments to the college chapter by the members shall be in accordance with a schedule to be developed by each college chapter; however, payments must be completed by the end of the academic year in which the woman is initiated. (*Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article VII, Section 2, A, 1, a)
 - (2) The college chapter shall be responsible to the general Fraternity for the payment of the initiation fees of its members and shall remit such fees to the Central Office in accordance with a schedule to be determined by Grand Council. Chapters with unusual circumstances may petition the

executive director for special consideration in payment to the general Fraternity.

- B. In 2014, the Fraternity annual per capita fee is one hundred fifty-five dollars (\$155). In 2015, the Fraternity annual per capita fee is one hundred seventy-five dollars (\$175). The college chapter shall collect the per capita fees from its members and shall remit such fees to Fraternity headquarters each fall in accordance with the schedule determined by Grand Council. (*Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article VII, Section 2, A, 2)
- C. Chapter member dues shall be \$476 per semester.
- D. Chapter new member dues shall be \$476 per semester
- E. Facility fee as set by the facility corporation board shall be \$548 per initiated member and \$548 per affiliated member payable at the following schedule:
 - (1) \$153 to be paid per semester for initiated members beginning the semester of initiation.
 - (2) \$153 for affiliated members beginning the semester of affiliation.
 - (3) The facility fee is payable in full within two years of pledging or affiliation or whenever a member leaves school, whichever is sooner, and is not refundable.
- F. Panhellenic dues shall be \$10 for the fall semester and \$15 for spring per semester for all active members and new members.
- G. Off-campus fee shall be \$0 per semester for all members enrolled in school but studying off-campus or abroad. The off-campus fee must be billed within the semester in which it is incurred.

Section 2. Financial Restrictions

- A. Special assessments shall not be levied on college chapter members unless permission is obtained from Grand Council. (*Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article VII, Section 2, A, 5)
- B. College chapter officers shall not receive remuneration in wages, room, board, or dues and shall not receive compensation in any form from suppliers. (*Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 3, F)
- C. Expenditures which exceed \$1,000 (one thousand dollars) shall be approved by the alumna finance advisor.

Section 3. Fines

- A. A listing of fines adopted by the chapter shall be provided to each member in written form by the member development committee and be as listed below:

List chapter valid excuses for missing an event:

- The only valid excuse is a official university class.
- Other excuses (emergency and illness) will be reviewed by the designated officer - only if notification guidelines are followed

- Work is not a valid excuse
- All excuses must be submitted in writing to the appropriate officer (by e-mail or handed to directly, no phone calls or text messages will be accepted).

All forms must be submitted BEFORE the date of the absence.

IF notification is not received prior to the event, the absence is unexcused.

- All excuses will be reviewed but not necessarily approved.

CHAPTER

Members are allowed 3 absences per semester.

Members will be fined \$25 for every absence after their 3rd excused absence.

Members are considered late after roll has STARTED.

Members will be fined \$10 for late attendance.

SPIRIT WEEK

Members are considered late after roll call is STARTED.

Members are considered absent after roll if they are more than one hour late.

Members will be fined \$50 a day if absent.

Members will be fined \$25 for late attendance or a half-day.

FORMAL RECRUITMENT WEEK

Members are considered late after roll call is STARTED.

Members are considered absent after roll if they are more than one hour late.

Members will be fined \$100 a day if absent.

Members will be fined \$50 for late attendance or a half-day.

CONTINUOUS OPEN BIDDING (COB)

Members will be fined \$25 if absent.

Members will be fined \$10 for late attendance.

Special consideration will be made if COB event is announced LESS than one week prior to its date.

RITUAL EVENTS

There will be two ritual reviews per semester.

Members will be fined \$10 if absent.

Members will receive 5 extra points toward wet events.

Members will attend both pledge and loyalty services.

Members will be fined \$15 if absent.

INITIATION

Members will attend initiation(s).

Members will be fined \$25 if absent.

PHILANTHROPY

Members will attend own philanthropy event and partial proceeds.

Member will be fined \$25 if absent.

EVENTS

Members will be fined \$10 if they sign up to attend a sisterhood event or social event and do not attend that event.

Members must e-mail the officer coordinating the event 24 hours prior to the event in order to cancel their attendance and have their \$10 fine waved.

CHAPTER DINNER

Members will be fined \$10 if they sign up for chapter dinner and do not attend.
Members must e-mail the officer coordinating chapter dinner 24 hours prior to chapter dinner in order to cancel their attendance and have their \$5 fine waved.

CHORES

Members who live in the chapter house and receive their first chore strike will be fined \$10 and given an extra chore.

Members who live in the chapter house and receive their second chore strike will be fined \$15 and an extra chore.

Members who live in the chapter house and receive their third chore strike will be fined \$20, extra chores, and will be called into the Membership Development Committee.

Every chore strike after the third will be an additional \$5 per fine.

Example: Fourth fine would be \$25

- B. All fines shall be placed on the bills of members and shall be collected in strict accordance with the procedures of Kappa Alpha Theta.

Section 4. Late Charges and Insufficient Funds

- A. Bills are due and payable upon receipt and delinquent 14 days after a statement is issued. Bills not paid by the statement due date are subject to a late charge of five percent of the total bill as billed by Billhighway. If the bill remains unpaid 14 days after the late charge is applied, the chapter shall charge an additional late fee of \$ 5% of total billhighway balance. The charge shall be in addition to the Fraternity's disciplinary procedures relating to financial delinquency.

Section 5. Procedures for Issuing and Collecting Bills

- A. Bills shall be issued no later than the first chapter meeting of the semester.
- B. Members must pay via their Billhighway account. The chief financial officer shall not accept payment for member accounts in any form.
- C. Bills are due and payable upon receipt and delinquent 14 days after a statement is issued.
- D. If a member is processed as delinquent by headquarters and subsequently pays her outstanding debt, the chapter will be charged a 25 percent processing fee.
- E. If a member is processed as delinquent by headquarters, or does not pay dues two weeks after the issue date and subsequently pays her outstanding debt, she will be charged a 50 percent processing fee on payments that are less than \$100 or charged a 25 percent processing fee on payments over \$100.
- F. Delinquent bills shall be handled in strict accordance with the procedures of Kappa Alpha Theta. (*Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article I, Section 8, A, 2, a [1] & 3, a)

Section 6. Room and Board.

- A. Room rent shall be \$amount specified by the University of Central Florida per semester, regardless of use.

- B. Board shall be \$0 per semester, regardless of use.
- C. Each non-resident member shall pay \$0 for out-of-house board per semester, regardless of use.
- D. Chapter dinner fee is payable by each non-resident member and shall be \$25 per semester, regardless of use.
- E. Usage fee
Each resident shall pay \$200 per semester.
Each non-resident member shall pay \$400 billed as room rental fee per semester.
- F. Guest cost

Room, \$0 per night; Breakfast: \$0; Lunch: \$ 0; Dinner: \$0.

Section 7. Room contracts and deposits

- A. Room contracts for the full school year shall be signed by November 30th for the following year.
- B. Room deposits of \$amount specified by the University of Central Florida shall be paid at the time of contract signing.
- C. Room contracts shall not be canceled or deposits returned after date specified by the University of Central Florida.
- D. Room deposits shall not be credited or refunded until all terms of the contract as signed have been fulfilled and all financial obligations to the chapter have been satisfied.
- E. Room contracts shall be signed for a full school year. If this is not possible because of a member studying abroad, student teaching, or studying on another campus, a joint contract with another member may be used to fill the room for the remainder of the year.

ARTICLE VII

CHAPTER FACILITY REGULATIONS

- Section 1. An active member, unless she is living at home, shall live in the chapter facility as an obligation of membership assumed with initiation. (*Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 7, A).
- Section 2. These chapter officers shall live in the chapter facility except in special instances determined by the advisory board chairman: CEO, CFO, CAO, COO, CEEd.O, CRO, CPO, CMO, and Facility Management Director.
- Section 3. Order of Preference for Filling the Chapter Facility
 - A. CEO shall have top selection priority and is required to live in the facility.
 - B. In addition to the CEO, the following members receive room pick priority:

1. CFO
2. Facility Management Director

Remaining members shall be based on cumulative point system.

If a tie, senior sister is given priority

1. Member is given one point for each active semester since their initiation date
 2. Member is given the following points according to their class standing:
 - a. Upperclassmen (Seniors & Juniors) 2pts.
 - b. Underclassmen (Sophomores & Freshmen) 1pt.
 3. Members who have previously lived in house are given one point for each year (half a point for each semester) spent living in the facility
 4. Members shall be given points equal to their cumulative GPA as reported by the university
 5. Members should be given a 1/2-point for each semester they have held an officer position
 6. Committee Chairmen shall be given 1/4 of a point for each semester they have held the position
 7. Members serving as a Panhellenic Executive officer shall be given 1 point for each semester they have held the position
 8. Members serving as a Panhellenic chair shall be given ¼ point for each semester they have held the position
- D. If the house does not fill in the spring semester, the following members are required to live in the facility:

1. COO
2. CPO
3. CMO
4. CEd.O
5. CRO
6. CAO

7. If the house is still not to capacity, the members from the bottom to the top of the points list will be required to move into the house. If one is called to move into the house and cannot, one must present her circumstances to a committee made up of the CEO, COO, ABC, and FCB President.

E. If the house does not fill in the summer semester, any executive member that is taking summer classes must live in the house.

Section 4. Visiting Hours

Guests shall be restricted to the public areas of the chapter facility; however, the chapter may establish visitation policies in accordance with guidelines established by Grand Council and requirements stated in *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 11.

Section 5. Chapter property shall not be loaned without the consent of the advisory board chairman and the facility corporation board president.

ARTICLE VIII ALCOHOL, DRUGS and WEAPONS

Chapter members shall adhere to the Fraternity's laws regarding Alcoholic Beverages, Drugs, and Weapons as stated in *Kappa Alpha Theta Bylaws*, Article IV, Section 8; Article IV, Section 9; and Article IV, Section 10.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

Provided that all Fraternity laws and procedures are followed for amending the chapter by-laws, the chapter bylaws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the chapter's active members, present and voting, a quorum being present, and provided that the proposed amendment has been presented in writing at the previous meeting. An amendment shall not become effective until approved by the advisory board chairman. The college chapter shall bring its bylaws into conformity with Fraternity laws following each Grand Convention. Such amendments do not require a vote of the chapter members.

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